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The Paris Book Exhibition of 1894.

By J. G. Rosengarten.

(Read before the American Philosophical Society, January 4, 1895.)

The November-December number of the *Paris Bulletin du Bibliophile* contains exhaustive notices of the "Exposition du Livre," opened at the Palais de l'Industrie, in Paris, during the summer of 1894. To those who had the good fortune to see this wealth of illustrations of the whole history of books in France, these notices are most useful, for there was no catalogue to guide the visitor through the vast space filled with the treasures of the collectors of Paris. To those who knew of the exhibition only from brief newspaper notices, it may be of interest to learn something of its extent and importance.

It had special significance in its fine examples of typography, illustration and bookbinding, but besides these, it had original drawings and engravings, and an almost endless variety of rarities—a whole history of the making of paper and its uses, a complete series of assignats, and great numbers of old specimens of mercantile paper, bills, drafts, shares of stock, stamped papers from the time of Louis XIV to our own, playing cards of every country—a whole series from China for instance—fans, invitations to dinners, fêtes and other entertainments, public and private, notices of service in the National Guard, visiting cards, not the commonplace pasteboard of to-day, but rich in vignettes and other ornamental illustration. There was a wealth of theatrical and other posters, in which the French led the way for an artistic development that has since spread all around the world. Autograph letters and documents, dating back for the last three centuries, were displayed in great profusion, under the title of "graphology." A whole series of papers showing the papermakers' marks, for a long series of years, was quite an important contribution.

The newspaper collection was very large, from the *Gazette de France*, founded in 1631, through the whole history of French periodicals. A number of *L'Ami du Peuple*, much discolored, is said to be the very copy in the hand of Marat, and stained with his blood when he was stabbed in his bath by Charlotte Corday. There were all the illustrated journals and newspapers so characteristic of French taste.

There was a large collection of ornamental letters and other typographical ornaments of the printers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, their catalogues, the decrees of Parliament ordering the destruction of condemned books and the punishment of the book peddlers who offered them for sale. There were whole series of printed books and very striking examples of bookbinding, engraving, typography, from the very outset to our own day, the bad and indifferent as characteristic as the good and the best. There was a fragment of the *Biblia Pauperum*,

xylographic work preceding the discovery of movable types. There were beautiful *incunabula*, works printed before 1500, and fine examples of printing of the sixteenth century, when all the problems of typography were already solved, black, brilliant, unalterable ink, paper often uneven but strong enough to resist use and wear all these years, type perfectly clear and extremely beautiful, illustrations of great artists, refined in execution, in exquisite taste; wood engravings in harmony with the text, yet all these were done with imperfect mechanical appliances, but much better done than the work of our own day with all the help of machinery carried to the highest perfection.

Then came the Elzevirs with their attractive books, and a whole series of printers of irreproachable correctness, charming simplicity and a noble air worthy of the books they issued from their presses. Publishers and printers alike were then men of knowledge, masters of the classical languages, writing Latin and reading Greek. Later on, as books increased in numbers, they lost in their typographical value; a few printers fought for the old standards of excellence, but they were driven from the field, and even when the art of illustration was at its best, the printing and paper were at their worst.

The nineteenth century has seen a still greater divorce between the good and the bad. Many books well printed and illustrated are made of wretched paper. That used in the *incunabula* has stood four centuries of hard usage without harm. That used in some of the books printed in this century of ours has not lasted for forty years. Typography was an art in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; to-day it is an art with and for the few, an industry with and for the many. It is carried on in vast establishments that have little in common with the old printing office, so admirably preserved in the Plantin Museum of Antwerp, and so well reproduced in Flameng's picture of Grolier's visit to the Aldine printing office in Venice, some cases full of type, some forms ready, a press on the model of the old wine presses, from which the name was derived. Nowadays there would be a great manufacturing establishment with machinery driven by steam or electricity, where printing is done with the best mechanical appliances.

At the Exposition there was a whole series of such machinery in use to-day. It is only to be regretted that there was not a retrospective exhibition, from the old hand press, the first steam press, that of the *Times* of 1814, when the announcement was proudly made that that paper was printed by steam—very primitive it was, too—printed on one side at a time. By 1834 there were 160 steam presses in use in France. By 1847 there was in use in Paris a steam press with four cylinders printing both sides at once, for the first time. In 1866, rotary presses were introduced, and in 1873 an endless printing press was first used in Paris. In 1878, there was exhibited a press printing 40,000 copies an hour, and cutting, counting, folding, all done by machinery. Since then printing in colors, photogravure, photolithography, and many other applications of the

sister arts have been added to the daily use of the printing office, and every day sees the announcement of some new handmaid to the old art preservative of all arts.

The cheapening of books has gone hand in hand with the improvements in typography and its allied arts, but at the same time books dear to the bibliophile are still being produced, and the last decade of the century, now fast drawing to its end, will leave to posterity a rich heritage of works representing splendidly all the forms of expression of art in books. The renaissance of making fine books is comparatively modern ; at one time it was limited to mere reproduction, but now it is marked by progressive originality, sometimes like the impressionists in painting starting by their struggles for novelty, but often charming by the good use made of the latest mechanical inventions. The French publishers have succeeded in making each a specialty, and the great books on architecture and decoration, the Bibles, the classic French authors, on art and on bibliography, will perpetuate their names among the world's master printers.

The Exposition du Livre was rich in typography, but it was also rich in illustrations of every epoch and every kind. The oldest illustrators were the miniaturists and illuminators of the Middle Ages. It is in the manuscripts anterior to the discovery of Guttenburg that their art can be best appreciated. One of the rooms on the lower floor of the Palais de l'Industrie was devoted to manuscripts, and many of them were rare marvels of beauty, all of real interest. Printing by the end of the fifteenth century supplanted manuscripts and illumination, an art that has only been revived in our own day. The learned chief of the famous Museum of the Louvre has told the sad story of a miniature painter for manuscripts, who after holding rank at the head of the Guild, saw his talent made useless in competition with the first printers, and he soon lost his occupation and the means of his livelihood. The old art was killed, but it had the honor of compelling its new rivals to imitate the work of their predecessors. In the best *incunabula* there is a constant effort to make the printed page look like manuscript. The decoration of the printed *Livres d'Heures* strove to imitate the models which scribes had carried to a rare degree of perfection. They were works of art and luxury, and do honor to the names of Vérard and Pigouchet, Kerver and Simon Vostre. Under the influence of Italian renaissance they worked a great change, visible in the books of the sixteenth century, with their large plates illustrating the text, the borders surrounding, the figures inserted in the pages. The designers and the engravers were artists of the first excellence.

The next age, that of the great masters of French literature, was too busy with the text to care for illustration, beyond an allegorical frontispiece or portraits, such as that of Malherbe in the edition of 1630, or of Corneille in that of 1644, excellent examples of engraving, and valuable historically. In religious books and in funeral orations there were still illustrations. The funeral sermons of the seventeenth century were not

only great masterpieces of pulpit eloquence, such as Bossuet's immortal sermons, but they were printed with noble and serious splendor. The great period of illustrated books was that of the eighteenth century, and it was at its best from 1750 to 1780. The poorest volumes had exquisite vignettes, and worthless verse or prose was made attractive by the capital illustrations, and a wit of the time said that the *beaux esprits* were like shipwrecked mariners, "ils se sont sauvés par les planches." The school of French illustrators of that time, with its traditions, its discipline, its great artists, each with his own style, yet all full of unity in their collective work, really illustrative of the text, was admirably exhibited. With the troubled times of the French Revolution, art too declined, but it revived with the romanticism of our own century, and showed thoroughly French liveliness. Then, after Meissonier and other really great masters, came a new eclipse, from 1850 to 1870, when Gustave Doré was the only famous name, his powerful inventive genius and his extreme abundance of work marred by careless execution. With 1870 began a new period of works of art and luxury. Many of them have already passed into oblivion or that abyss of second-hand stalls and low prices that properly mark their real value or valuelessness, but there remains a wealth of really good work. Many of the original drawings by the best artists were in the exhibition, and not only their designs for books, but for fans, posters and advertisements. The engravers on wood, too, were there, and the original designs from many famous hands were placed alongside the reproductions, to show how much credit belongs to the engraver, and the perfection of the typographic and other processes, both in black and white and in colors. Even in photographic illustrations there was evidence of art in the choice of subjects, in the grouping and composition. A very competent critic, M. Léon Gruel, himself one of the great Paris bookbinders, and the owner of a remarkable collection of bindings and of everything that illustrates this fine art, has given a capital account of the value and importance of the retrospective exhibition of bookbinding, to which he was one of the largest contributors. He loaned a copy of an unknown edition of a grand folio "*Speculum morale*," without date or name of printer, but certainly not later than 1477, for the binding is dated 1478. Gruel describes the binding with all the love of a collector and the critical acumen of a bookbinder. The book was bound by one of his great predecessors as a gift of the Emperor Maximilian, and it is both outwardly and inwardly a fine example of the artistic in printing, illuminating and binding. The next of M. Gruel's exhibits has in gothic characters the name of the binder, for in the fifteenth century and in the beginning of the sixteenth century, the bookbinders took an honest pride in their work, and perpetuated their names on it, often by religious texts in which they commended themselves to the protection of their patron saints. Each bookbinder had his own particular saint, and St. Sebastian, St. Maurice, St. Barbe, St. Nicholas, are thus stamped on the bindings, often with an humble petition for protection, signed by the bookbinder, and

there were books of 1513 and 1526 and 1529 and 1540 so bound and marked, the last a Martial bound for Charles V, by a bookbinder of Amsterdam, with the arms of that city and his own name in full, as well as the arms and motto of the great Emperor. In the good old times every publisher was his own printer and bookbinder, for in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries no books were sold unbound. The bookbinders went from city to city in search of employment from the printers and publishers, and only in the monasteries were there monks who were employed as authors, illuminators and binders. Every printer and publisher had his own device and legend, which was reproduced on the binding as well as on the title-page. The Elzevirs, the Plantins, the great printers of Amsterdam and Antwerp and Lyons, as well as those of Paris, thus made the binding an integral and important part of their books, and the books with the cypher of Francis I, and the arms of Paul V, the Groliers and the Mañolis, all reveal the owner and the binder.

There was a fine folio Erasmus, printed in Venice in 1508, annotated throughout by Grolier in his own handwriting, with a drawing by him of a medal referred to in the text, and with his familiar legend, "Jo. Grolieriz Lugdunen et amicorum," written on the last page by the owner. There was a Venice Homer of 1539 bearing the name of an amateur binder of great merit, but hitherto unknown. There were bindings for Christian VII of Denmark, and for Louis XIII, as well as those for famous collectors of less rank, bearing the names of the binders, and M. Gruel exhibited a bound copy of the rules of the bookbinders of Paris, 1750, with the name of the binder, the date of his birth, of his marriage, of his apprenticeship and of his becoming a master workman, while the great Padeloup contented himself with putting his name modestly under the title. Among the curious bindings were those of pretended books, really vessels for liquor. On one Franklin's portrait is preserved in a medallion, another has the title "L'Esprit de Rousseau," and as such false books were said to be for the use of country clergymen, there was a special joke in making Franklin and Rousseau, the enemies of the church, contribute to the comfort of its servants. During the French Revolution the nobles had their books bound with republican devices concealing their arms. The Restoration had a wealth of great bookbinders, and their successors of our own day, no matter how strong their rivalry, were close neighbors in the cases in which some of their finest examples were gathered at this Exposition du Livre. There was a wealth of curious historical material, the charters of the bookbinders' associations or guilds of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, their accounts, inventories, tools, etc., and a complete library of books on bookbinding, now quite a collection in numbers.

The Exposition du Livre had its historical side. Great rooms were full of material of the most precious kind; the whole story of French caricatures was told on its walls; French art in every form of application to books and printing of every kind was splendidly exhibited, and besides there was a capital exhibition of every industry related to printing—inks, paper,

types, lithographic and photographic and other processes, with the books and illustrations showing their practical uses and application. It was such a collection as only the enthusiasm of Frenchmen could bring together, and yet it lost much of its value and interest for want of a catalogue, for the Exposition must end, the wonderful collections be returned to their owners, and the opportunity of studying the history of printing and book-making in its best sense will be lost. It is almost impossible to hope that such an exhibition can soon, if ever, be organized here. The French have a wonderful talent for organization, and the great collectors seem to have united in this Exposition, giving the loan of their treasures for a long period, arranging them with admirable skill, and sharpening the zeal and enthusiasm for collecting which is useful only when it serves to make the world wiser, by enabling it to take stock of the work of past years, to trace the rise and growth and changes of an art, and none better deserves such painstaking study and research than printing with its kindred and allied industries, and the Paris Exposition du Livre was certainly honorable to French collectors, to printers and binders and artists, all joining to show how much the world owes to France for the past and for the present of the art of printing, revealed in this exhibition.

There was a letter in the *Nation* of September 20 last, describing the Paris "Exposition du Livre," critical and in the main uncomplimentary. In looking back on my own visit to the Exposition, I recall the very instructive and interesting things I saw there, and those of little value have been forgotten. Still I owe to the *Nation* the information that Paris has its "École du Livre"—what it is or where it is the writer does not mention, nor where we can find anything about it. The *Nation* does speak in praise of the foreign exhibits, the publications of the University Press of Cambridge, and says that a handful of illustrated papers and magazines, represented the books of Great Britain, and a great array of names of illustrators, booksellers, journalists and diplomats, headed by the ambassador of the United States in Paris, the members of the American section, but there was nothing from this country or from Italy, Spain or Germany. There was a small but comprehensive exhibit from Denmark, showing to advantage the great Scandinavian illustrators, whose names are too seldom heard out of their own country, intelligent interpreters in good wood engraving, and their work published in volumes, to whose excellence printer, binder and papermaker have all contributed. In Copenhagen, too, there is a "School of the Book," apparently on much the same lines as the institution of that name in Paris. The *Nation* praises, in a half-patronizing way, the retrospective and documentary part of the Exposition, the wealth of the private collections, especially of bookbindings, but in the main condemns the exhibition as a whole. That it deserves more than this is, I think, clear from the abstract you have heard of the articles describing it in the *Bulletin du Bibliophile*, the venerable organ of French book lovers, for it was founded in 1834.

M. Gruel points, with pride, to the work of early bookbinders, who, like himself, have also been bibliographers in the best sense of the word. He calls attention to the handiwork of the Plantins, who, like their contemporaries, signed their bindings with the same bookmark that designated their printing. Among these were Philippe Pigouchet, Denis Roce, Robert Macé, the Gryphes of Lyons, the brothers Angelius, Jean Bogard, Madeleine Bourselle, widow of François Regnault ; Jacques Dupuis, and the Elzevirs. Christopher Plantin was born near Tours in 1514. His first occupation was that of a bookbinder, which he learned in the workshop of Robert or Robinet Macé, at Caen, who was both printer and bookbinder. Plantin went to Antwerp, where he became famous as founder of the printing and publishing house that existed in his family from 1549 until 1876, when it was made a public museum, one of the most interesting, indeed the only one of its kind in Europe, and well worth a visit. M. Gruel shows that in 1522, Plantin bound the account books of the city of Antwerp ; that he added to his other pursuits that of fine work in leather, boxes, covers, coffers, richly decorated—an artistic handiwork that Gruel, too, has made part of his own trade.

In the Plantin Museum at Antwerp, there is a single example of Plantin's binding with his mark, and the metal stamp is preserved along with the type and the woodcuts used in the volume. M. Gruel reproduces from Plantin's account books the items that show his industry as a bookbinder, giving the prices of the material he used, the mark, a compass with the motto, "*Labore et Constantia*," the press, the wages paid his journeymen and the bills rendered to his employers, thus bringing us back to the time when bookbinding was an art in the hands of artisans who made it part of their business of printing and illustrating books.

The catalogue of the Museum Plantin Moretus, by M. Max Rooses, the keeper, is interesting even to those who have not enjoyed a visit to this curious relic of the faithful pursuit of one business by the same family for over three hundred years. In 1549 when Plantin established himself at Antwerp, that city was next to Paris in importance. He soon gained reputation for his bindings and his other work in leather. He became a citizen in 1550, and that year a member of the Guild of St. Luke as a printer. In 1555, he printed his first book ; but his work was interrupted on a charge of heresy, and he took refuge for a year in Paris, returning to Antwerp, where he was protected and employed by Philip the II, Cardinal Granvelle, and other notable persons. He printed, under their auspices, a Bible in five languages ; Breviaries and Missals and Liturgies for Spain, for a privilege from Rome for Spain and its colonies was the foundation of his fortune. In 1576, he moved into the building which to-day is the Museum perpetuating his name and work. His son-in-law, Moretus, succeeded in 1589, on his father-in-law's death, to the business, and transmitted it with its traditions on his death, in 1610, to his two sons. One died in 1618, the other in 1641, and was succeeded by his son, who died in 1674. The business passed then to his son, who died in 1692,

and then to his son who died in 1730, and was succeeded by a brother, who died in 1757; his son continued it until 1768; his widow until 1797; their four sons successively until 1820, and they in turn were followed by one of the next generation down to 1865, and he, by a younger brother, who died in 1880, having sold the printing office with all its contents to the city of Antwerp in 1876. The last book bearing the Plantin imprint is dated 1866, but work was continued until 1867, and the last tax paid as printers was in 1871.

The Museum is rich in works of art, principally portraits of different members of the family and the authors and artists employed by them. Rubens and his pupils and contemporaries and successors are well represented. The books of account show exactly what was paid to them for these pictures and for the drawings for the illustration of the books printed by the Plantins. The library is rich in illuminated and other rare and precious manuscripts; in editions of the Plantin publications from 1555 down to the last issue from their press in 1866; in autograph letters and papers relating to their business during all these years; in copies of the Antwerp *Gazette*, from 1620, the oldest newspaper in Europe. The shop still contains on its shelves the books that used to be on sale, with price currents of books of 1592, 1628, 1642, and the Index expurgatorius of 1569 and 1571, to guard against offering books prohibited by Rome or Spain. The printing office, with its antique appliances, and the memorials of the most famous readers and correctors of the press, many of them men of great learning, are piously preserved. The font of type used in all these years is well preserved, and so are the old presses. The library is rich in incunabula and rare printed books from Gutenberg down, and by way of contrast a complete set of the *Journal des Débats* from 1800 to 1871. Autograph letters, fine wood and steel engravings, maps, plans, portraits, vignettes, engraved arms, book plates, busts, statues, are displayed in great profusion. The dwelling rooms are preserved in their ancient order, and show just how well-to-do people lived in the sixteenth century. There are over fourteen thousand volumes in the Plantin Moretus Library. The main library was built in 1640, and is still as it was then. The archives of the printing house cover all its business from 1555 to 1864, and the foundry where the type were cast still retains its antiquated appliances. There is no counterpart of the old printing office thus piously preserved down to our own day.

The question naturally suggests itself, if the first printers imitated manuscript, how did Latin type come into use. The earliest books were printed with types resembling the styles for book writing then popular in the middle of the fifteenth century. Pointed Black Letter was preferred for church service books, but for books for the laity a simpler form of black letter was preferred, semi or pointed Gothic. In 1486, the German character was first used in Germany. The first printers of Italy, themselves Germans, Sweinheym and Pannartz (1465-73), began work with new types of the Roman form, but with many features of the black

letter. In 1487, Hahn, a rival German printer, began printing in another Roman letter, which also showed a preference for the Gothic form. The first really good form of Roman, adopted everywhere to the suppression of all others, was made by Jenson of Venice, and shown in his *Eusebius* of 1470. Accepted by the educated, it was, however, rejected by the common people, who were just beginning to buy books, and Jenson had to print popular books in Gothic characters, and the most beautiful contemporary books of Paris, the Netherlands and England were in pointed type. The first book printed in England in Roman type was Henry VIII's treatise, which secured for him the title of Defender of the Faith, so printed by Pynson possibly in deference to Italian taste and in compliment to the Pope. Aldus Manutius added a new style, the Italic, based on a written style then popular with copyists. The Italic, first shown in the 1501 *Virgil*, differed from modern Italic in several respects, notably in the fact that the capitals are upright and stand apart from the text. The Lyons founders, moved by the popularity of Italic, soon after produced the *Cursiv François* or *Civilité*, an unreadable letter. The disuse of black letter in France was largely due to Tory of Paris, and his *Champ Fleuri* of 1526. Caxton's type was distinctly Flemish, that of his successors resembled the black letters of the printers of the day of Paris and Rouen. Black letter maintained its popularity in England and the Netherlands, after it had fallen into disuse in France. English printers had no type foundry until John Day established his, 1546-84, and had to accept Dutch type with their mannerisms. English readers showed a marked preference for black letter, and it was used in some of the most popular books, such as the first edition (1525) of Tyndall's *New Testament*, Coverdale's *Bible* (1535), Cranmer's *Great Bible* (1540), and the authorized Prayer Books. In the reign of Roman Catholic Mary, Roman was the proper text for books of devotion, but under Protestant Elizabeth, Prayer Books in black letter had the preference. Fox's *Acts and Monuments* (1560) was in black letter. Soon after the printers evinced a partiality for Roman for English classics. The writings of Shakespeare and Bacon appeared in Roman. Black letter was out of fashion at the close of the sixteenth century."—*Chambers' Encyc.*, s. v. "Types."

"The earliest known representation of a printing press is dated 1507, and it pictures an apparatus which is little more than a modification of the ancient wine press—hence the name."—*do.*, s. v. "Printing," p. 410.

Under the head of "Black Letter," *Chambers' Encyc.* says: "The first types were copies of the letters in use in the middle of the fifteenth century. Two sorts of letters were in use—*Roman* from the fifth to the close of the twelfth century, when they gradually began to pass into what has been called *Gothic*, which continued till the sixteenth century, when, in most European countries, they were superseded by Roman letters. The classic taste of Italy could not long tolerate Gothic, and it was modified until it assumed the shape to which the name of Roman has since been

given. The first works printed with these new types were the two beautiful editions of Pliny's *Natural History*, one by John of Spires at Venice in 1469, the other by Nicholas Jenson, also at Venice, in 1472. Aldus Manutius attempted in 1501 to introduce the Aldine or Venetian Italic, but the Roman soon spread from Venice all over the west of Europe. Although the Germans still continue the use of a form of black letter, about one-half their books are in Roman."

Horologium Achaz (Christophorus Schissler, Artifex).

By Julius F. Sachse.

(Read before the American Philosophical Society, February 1, 1895.)

Among the scientific apparatus, models and philosophical instruments preserved in the cabinets of this Society, there have been conspicuously displayed two brass plates, finely wrought, engraved, chased and gilded, without, however, bearing any label explanatory of their former use or import.

As a matter of fact they are parts of a unique instrument, the equal of which is not to be found in any museum or scientific collection in the world.

Unfortunately, several parts of this instrument are missing, and among them the mythological figure which once stood upon the base, and elevated or held up the larger plate or basin. The gnomon or rod used to cast a shadow, as well as the apparatus held aloft by the figure upon the rim, whereby a fine pencil of light was thrown upon the dial in place of a shadow (Photo-Sciaterica), are also wanting; the magnetic needle in the small compass in the base has also long since disappeared.

I have endeavored to restore this instrument as well as I could, in the absence of any definite account of how it was in its original state; for no published description was allowed by the censorship of the press, for reasons which I will explain in the course of this paper.

It will be noticed that I have substituted a tripod between base and dial, in place of the lost figure. The instrument was known by the mystics and philosophers of old as an "HOROLOGIUM ACHAZ," or Dial of Achaz.